

FACES OF



# Process and Procedure for Safety and Compliance

ResponsibleAg audits completed at 23 locations in just 3 months

Valley Agronomics is committed to doing things the right way. For example, in 2019, the Pocatello, ID, location was named the Ambassador of Respect award winner for North America by Corteva Agriscience for its work in the area of environmental stewardship.

When the Valley Ag leadership team led by Dave Holtom, CEO, and Richard Lloyd, COO for Agronomy, turned their focus to enhancing the organization's employee safety and regulatory compliance practices, they chose the ResponsibleAg Certification Program as the roadmap.

ResponsibleAg is an industry-led initiative committed to helping agribusinesses ensure they are compliant with environmental, health, safety and security regulations to keep employees, customers and communities safe. The initiative offers a systematic approach to facility evaluation, including a facility audit conducted by a ResponsibleAg-credentialed auditor, recommendations for improvements

and a comprehensive collection of resources members can turn to for information and education.

### Collective process leads to employee collaboration, buy-in

Valley Ag dove in headfirst, enrolling its 23 locations throughout Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Utah in the ResponsibleAg program in March 2019. Audits began in July, and by Sept. 30, all locations had finished the ResponsibleAg audit and had corrective action plans in place.

"Our locations are very similar, so going through the ResponsibleAg audit as a group made sense for us. It gave us a methodical guide to follow and brought clarity and understanding to the entire process. It also helped us lay a foundation of collaboration between locations," explains Max Tinsley, Director of Environmental Health and Safety at Valley Ag.

"For example, during the audits, we found similar issues at several locations. A safety committee of location managers and employees across Valley Ag was formed. This group is working together to develop new policies and practices to mitigate and eliminate hazards. We are implementing their solutions across the organization," Tinsley says. He believes involving employees in the process improves their understanding of safety. It also helps them understand their value to the organization and demonstrates to them how an injury ultimately affects them, their families, their coworkers and the overall production of the organization.

### Independent evaluations key in choosing ResponsibleAg

When the Valley Ag leadership team decided



MAX TINSLEY  
Director,  
Environmental  
Health and Safety



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to join ResponsibleAg, having locations evaluated by someone from outside the company was a key factor, according to Ryan Lloyd, Safety Supervisor, who was instrumental in the audit process.

"Because this was our first systematic review of safety and compliance, we wanted to start with an outside, third-party look at all locations," Lloyd says. "We partnered with Billy Pirkle and Greg Groves and worked to schedule the audits in a way that would maximize their time and complete the audits quickly." Pirkle and Groves are independent auditors who have been credentialed by ResponsibleAg to conduct safety and regulatory compliance audits. Their expertise not only helped identify areas of improvement for Valley Ag, the audit process also was educational for employees, location managers and the company's safety leaders.

### Audits help bring safety personnel up to speed on agriculture

Although Tinsley and Lloyd both had environmental, health and safety experience prior to joining Valley Ag in June 2018 and May 2019, respectively, agriculture was a fairly new industry for them. Tinsley gained his safety knowledge in the U.S. Air Force, and Lloyd spent more than 10 years in the nuclear energy industry.

"I went with Greg for more than half the audits, which was a huge benefit for me," Lloyd says. "He helped us understand the 'why' behind the regulations

**"The ResponsibleAg audit helped provide clarity in developing processes directing Valley Agronomics towards a safe and compliant future."**

– Max Tinsley

and answered the questions that the location managers and I had. As we've had questions since the audits about corrective actions or implementing new practices, Greg and the ResponsibleAg staff have been there to answer them."

Lloyd also has turned to the ResponsibleAg Compliance Assistance Library for help learning the ins and outs of compliance and safety in agricultural retail.

"The library is focused on the agricultural retail industry. Everything I need is there. I can do my research on Google, but if I do, I go down rabbit holes on things

that aren't relevant," Lloyd says. "With ResponsibleAg, I know the information directly applies to what we are doing at Valley Ag."

To learn more about ResponsibleAg or to become a member visit [www.ResponsibleAg.com](http://www.ResponsibleAg.com) or call 270.683.6777.



RYAN LLOYD  
Safety Supervisor



Employees at Valley Agronomics are working together to develop and implement safety policies and practices across the organization. ResponsibleAg audits have been the basis for identifying areas for improvement.

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[www.ResponsibleAg.org](http://www.ResponsibleAg.org)

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## MISSION

ResponsibleAg is an industry-led initiative **committed** to helping agribusinesses properly store and handle farm input supplies. The program helps members ensure they are **compliant** with environmental, health, safety and security regulations to keep employees, customers and our communities **safe**.

